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there should be such traces of another hand in it, as to make many readers think that she contributed the religious and didactic portions, and some other writer the melodramatic parts,—the smugglers, and, in general, the excitement. We doubt, on the whole, whether this suggestion is quite fair to Miss Sewell, who certainly has very remarkable power in story-telling, which, in a new walk, may assume such vivacity and spirit as to surprise even those who know her best. Now “Cleve Hall” certainly does exhibit her in a somewhat new walk. As if she had abandoned to Miss Yonge the especial “Church of England Novel,”—and with some reason,—she has written a book quite free from the peculiar machinery of the established church,—a book which other Protestants can read with complacency. She has laid herself out, and as we think very successfully, in delineating different shades of character, all of which we should pronounce good, and even estimable, if we saw them in life, while very different from one another. Very much harder is this delineation than the cool subdivision which describes Mrs. Percival as a fool, Agatha Percival as weak and wicked, and Margaret Percival as self-denying, stained with no fault but a transient insubordination to a church which was represented in her own home by an unprincipled man. The peculiarities of “Cleve Hall” seem to us to constitute an improvement on the system pursued in Miss Sewell’s other novels; and if this be not the best of her books in the novel-reader’s eye,—as perhaps it is,—it is certainly the best intended, on any standard which includes an estimate of its moral.

2. — *Maud, and other Poems.* By ALFRED TENNYSON, Doctor of Civil Law and Poet Laureate. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1855.

ONE must hesitate before he accepts the wreath of the Poet Laureate; for from that moment it seems as if the poet most loved, even most petted, were given over, as if he were a politician, to be food for unkind, biting comment, which he would have been wholly spared had not the Queen chosen him as her own. We are certain we have heard unkind things said of “Maud,” which would never have been said had Mr. Alfred Tennyson been a plain D. C. L.

Now there is no doubt that this poem is a charming rosary, strung of beads, very unlike one another, of playful, or sad, or meditative poetry, always poetry, and always natural, fresh, true, and new. Have we—if we study our rights carefully,—have we any right to ask more than this? Has any one promised us that “Maud” shall have a

beginning, middle, and end? Has any one promised us that it should have a finished *dénouement*? Indeed, do we often get that same desideratum, a finished *dénouement*, in the every-day world, to which, after all, poetry is, in some sort, bound? Is not our impetuous demand for more of "Maud,"—our blank disappointment that the curtain falls where it does,—an evidence that we have gone to the opera for the story,—and not for the music? We have our music, our fascinating poetry;—the bits of it are all woven into our memories, so that we shall never lose them;—and shall we turn to the poet who has sung them to us, and say, "What happened then?"—as if he were only a story-teller in a café at Broussa?

For people who want to have stories told them which shall bring out everybody and everything all square, we recommend constant perusal of the tales of these very Eastern story-tellers. We rejoice once a year in going through the Arabian Nights,—always with new joy, and always delighted at the end of each story to be told that "they passed a most comfortable and agreeable life, until they were visited by the terminator of delights, and the separator of companions." But we are catholic still in our tastes, and we do not think it fair to demand that Mr. Tennyson shall bring round his exquisite Maud and her lover to precisely such a haven. Indeed, as life itself is not all haven,—we do not see why it should be necessary that he should bring them into any haven at all.

The private history of the poem is probably this. Mr. Tennyson seems to have conceived the idea of it, meaning that it should be at least a longer work, probably more elaborate, than he has made it. He wrote away happily at it, we should infer, at two or three several times. But the story got involved beyond the possibility of any disentanglement by ordinary laws;—the first enthusiasm was over, and the poem then, if we guess its history aright, lay *perdu* for years in the author's portfolio. Time passed, and he became Laureate. One and another occasional poem were at last to be published. Once more he drew out "Maud," and was really surprised to find how exquisite were some of its best passages,—and wondered if he could do so well now. "Certainly they are worth publishing," we imagine him saying to himself;—and so there is hurried on a clumsy postscript about the Russian war, and the whole is sent to press.

For ourselves, we are gratified with what we have; and will not complain that we have no more.

In the same volume, "The Brook" is a charming little idyl. "The Charge of the Light Brigade" makes one of the minor pieces, in the form in which posterity will know it, for posterity accepts a poet's own

second editions, and forgets what he put in the newspapers. Still, we cannot but regret that a sober second-thought should have cut out the lines, which are the appropriate motto of the whole war ;—

“ Not though the soldier knew
Some one had blundered.”

There is enough left in all the poems, however, to show that a Laureate is not kept at all in fear by the court. There are very spirited passages, which would teach good lessons to any government in Europe or America.

3. *Wealth and Beauty. A Poem ; read before the Phi Beta Kappa Society in Cambridge, July 19, 1855.* By WILLIAM HENRY HURLBUT. Cambridge : John Bartlett. 1855.

THE recurrence of the anniversaries of the college literary societies is now so regular, and these anniversaries are now so frequent, as to make quite a remarkable feature in the literature of a year. They are a good deal laughed at by people who think they gain reputation by laughing at what exists ; and “ Phi Beta oratory ” is sometimes spoken of as a type of turgid, pompous, and useless declamation.

We have no such opinion of it ; and we believe, moreover, that the recurrence of these exercises is having a very happy effect in widening the sympathies and interests of the men of different colleges, and gradually creating a catholic spirit among them, to which little else in our college system tends. The eagerness of these different mock societies to obtain speakers who will call a large audience together, breaks down the spirit of clan, which would restrict them to some one of their own set or sect. No one can see the result without perceiving that much more is gained than the amusement of an hour. This year, for instance, Mr. H. W. Beecher addresses the Phi Beta Kappa at Cambridge, and Mr. F. D. Huntington the branch at New Haven. From the Orthodox pulpit there comes to Cambridge a man all alive with just the freshness and liberality which Unitarian bigots think impossible among Orthodox surroundings. To the Orthodox college there goes a gentleman, of whose address we have been told that its profound and earnest religious drift mightily stirred the whole assembly, and showed to them, in turn, how unjust the idea which Orthodox bigots entertain as to the range of what men call the Liberal pulpit. Wendell Phillips at Dartmouth, R. W. Emerson at Amherst, and, in other years, Horace Bushnell at Cambridge, are all illustrations of the way in